

WAR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN NATIONS DON'T WORK IT OUT?



New weapons were one cause of the terrible devastation of World War I.

War is the worst kind of conflict of all. It's bad enough when a few people fight. But when entire countries can't get along, the results are horrible. The weapons of war are frightening—tanks, bombs, missiles, jet fighters. In wartime, people are killed. Homes, businesses, and schools are destroyed. The

countryside may be ruined. In the 20th century alone, wars killed more than 160 million people. And countless others were wounded or left homeless.

Why can't nations work out their conflicts before they turn to war? Despite the horrors, people have always fought wars. They have fought for

**In World War II,
bombs destroyed
homes and buildings
in cities like London.**



many different reasons. Nations fight to defend themselves or other nations from attack. They fight because they want something another nation has, such as land. They fight because they believe they are right and the other nation is wrong. Sometimes groups within a nation fight against each other. This is called a civil war.

Twice in the 20th century, so many nations fought each other at the same time that the wars were called World Wars. World War II lasted for six years and involved 61 countries including the

United States and Great Britain on one side and Germany and Japan on the other. Almost 60 million people died as a result of that war.

Most countries try to avoid wars. World leaders talk to each other in an effort to resolve their differences. International groups, such as the United Nations, work to avoid wars. Individual people also work toward peace. Former president Jimmy Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his efforts to promote world peace.

Adapted from an article by Mike Weinstein



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the United Nations at
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